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B. CRISPA IN 4 INCH POT

THE STORY OF
Cluberous Begonias
By Lowe

Lowe's Greenhouse and Nursery
CHAGRIN FALLS, OHIO

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Brilliant Blossoms . . .

FOR SHADY PLACES

TUBEROUS rooted begonias are the answer to the gardener's prayer for something that will bloom in the shade. The flowers are large, sometimes nine or ten inches across, and are produced all summer, standing well above the thrifty foliage. They excite comment wherever planted.

Our grandmothers grew tuberous begonias, for it was in 1880 and 1890 that these plants reached their highest perfection. But they were all grown from imported bulbs. Then the U. S. quarantine law forbade their importation along with other hard to disinfect plants. The stock of bulbs on hand was soon depleted and the next generation knew nought about tuberous rooted begonias. It is only of recent years that we have learned how to grow these brilliant blossoms from seed. Now anyone can have them in all their brilliant colorings if attention is given to their simple needs of water, food and shade.

Choose an eastern or northern exposure, or some place where a tree will filter the sunlight through its leafy branches. The hot sun of July and August will make the leaves become glossy and curl and the flowers will bend their heads. Toward evening they will revive, but continued exposure to sun will ruin the plants.

Well grown seedlings in three-inch pots will throw more blooms than plants raised from bulbs which have been carried over the winter. However, bulbs will bloom a little earlier than seedling plants.

The foliage is succulent and the plants need lots of water and plenty of food. But the large and brilliant flowers are worth it.

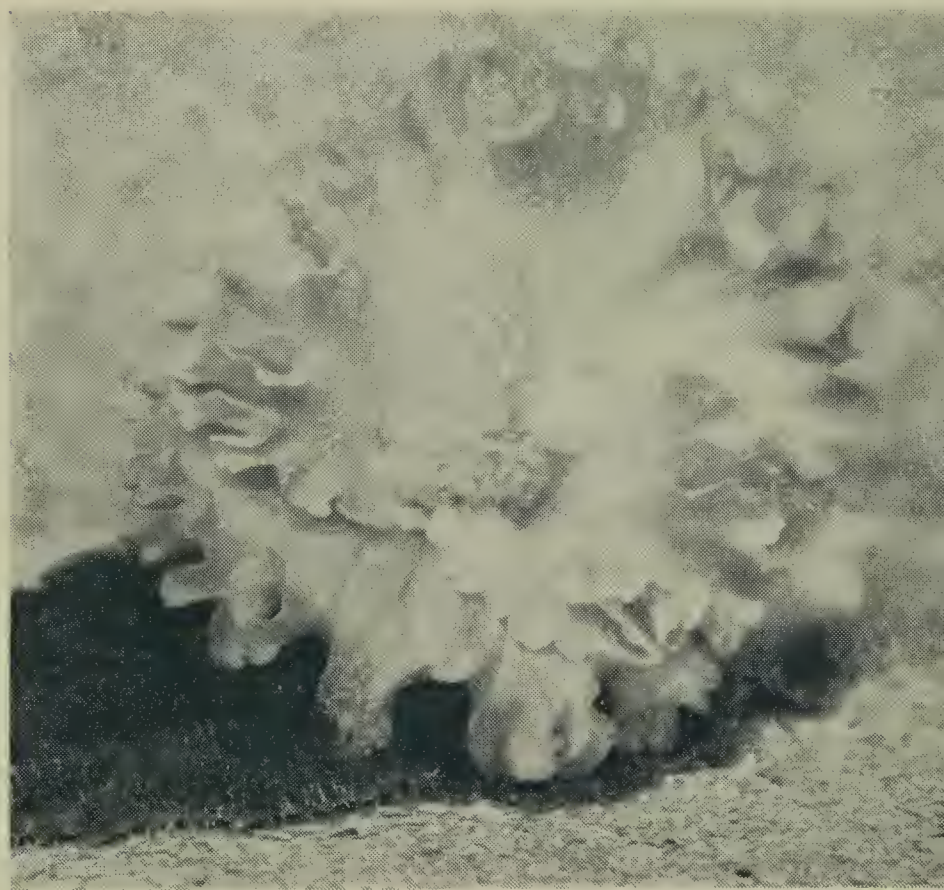
BEGONIA CRISPA . . .

Begonia crisa has the largest blooms of all the tuberous begonias, sometimes reaching a diameter of ten inches. The male bloom has a center of closely bunched yellow stamens about the size of a marble. This type has just four petals and the large male bloom is generally set above one or two smaller female blooms. Sometimes these have five petals, but the female blossoms are much smaller. Available in mixed colors only.



B. CRISPA UNDULATA . . .

B. Crisa undulata is a good sized, single ruffled type. Although it will not bloom as large as *b. crisa*, it is fully as pretty, for it has a ruffled edge which helps make up for the loss in size. Mixed or separate colors of red, white, pink, yellow, copper, orange. *Torenia fourneri* and *heliotrope* are good bedding companions for any of the begonias as they prefer the same conditions and add a desirable note of blue.



Most of the plants bear two kinds of flowers on the same stem—a gorgeous large one which is the male and a plainer, five-petaled female blossom. The male bloom will drop first, then the female ones should be removed to conserve the plant's strength for other blooms. The blossoms are wondrously effective laid on one of the new mirror centerpieces or dropped in a rose bowl.



B. CRISPA CRISTATA . . .

B. *Crispa cristata*. The male bloom has two large petals on the sides with the top and bottom ones somewhat smaller. All four look as if a person had taken several petals and shirred them together, then pasted them to the base of each petal giving a tufted or coxcomb effect. The blooms measure three to five inches across in red, white, pink, yellow, copper and orange. Each bloom has the yellow ball center regardless of the petal color.



B. GIANT DOUBLE . . .

B. *Giant double*. These blooms run from four to seven inches across. Some are so double the solid round balls of velvet-like petals resemble a many petalled rose, others are like water lilies—all are very beautiful. The blossoms look wonderfully well in the modern flat type table decoration. They will last 12 to 20 hours out of water without showing a great deal of wilt and so are particularly good as boutonnieres. Scarlet, crimson, rose, salmon, copper, white, orange, yellow.

Tuberous begonias are particularly good to brighten an evergreen hedge or foundation planting of shrubs. Try them on the north side of the house or in porch boxes under the shade of awnings. An interesting pink and blue effect can be achieved by alternating begonia pendula and lobelia sapphire along the front edge of such a box.

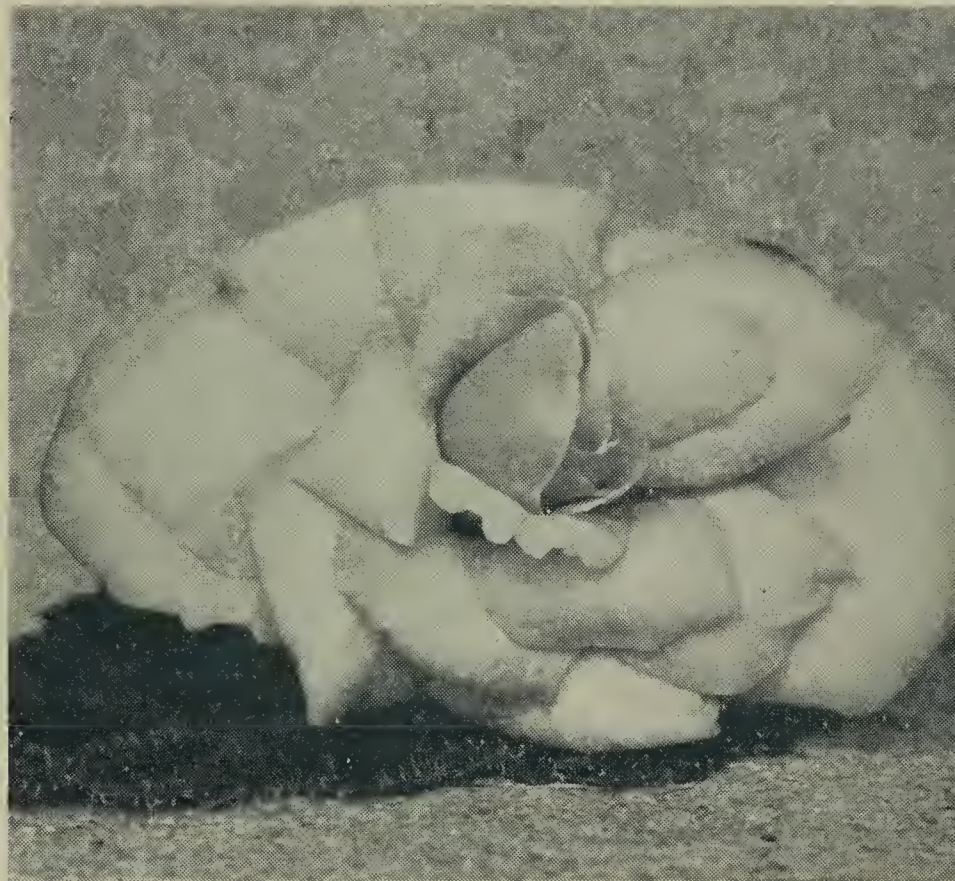
B. FIMBRIATA . . .

B. Fimbriata. Ruffled blooms opening from four to seven inches and very double. They resemble a carnation in form, especially the white one. This variety is a good, strong grower and very floriferous. The small side blooms are single as with the other classes. After the center bloom has fallen, as it will with a very short stem, most of them will make wonderful rose bowl material as they stay in good condition a long time. Red, white, pink, yellow, copper.



B. BOUTON DE ROSE . . .

B. Bouton de Rose (rosebud). This type is very double but it has a different form. From the time the first petal starts to unfold until the last one is open, it has a rosebud center. The face of each petal is a creamy white, while the back is a soft pink, giving a two-tone or bicolor effect which is remarkable. This type does not come in distinct separate colors. There is a slight variation in form and coloring, but all will blend nicely with themselves or with other varieties.



We have the largest collection of varieties of tuberous rooted begonias in the United States. 40,000 seedlings in three-inch pots, coming into bloom, and ready for planting around Decoration Day. We have grown them since 1918 and find that as a general rule seedling plants will be more varied, grow larger, and have more blooms than those from bulbs.

CHILLICOTHE ROAD, CHAGRIN FALLS, OHIO



B. PENDULA . . .

B. Pendula (hanging). The blooms of this type are generally two to three inches across and two to three inches long, hanging from thin wiry stems that swing and sway in the breeze like a clock pendulum. At first this plant will grow upright, but as the season advances the stems lengthen and droop from the weight of the bloom, making an ideal variety for the edge of a porch box or the sides of a hanging basket. Mixed colorings, with pink and salmon predominating.



B. MARMORATA . . .

B. Marmorata (marbled, single and double). The single marmorata was one of the first tuberous rooted begonias developed by Lemoine and from this type have sprung the others. The bloom is three to five inches across and the single and double are marked very much alike. The main color is a medium rose, and it is marbled with a creamy white. The amounts of rose and white markings vary, but otherwise come very true to the picture. The left bloom is double and the right is single.

B. PICTA . . .

Although somewhat like B. Marmorata, B. Picta is a very distinct type. The coloring is similar; a deep rose base-color covered entirely with white spots instead of white marbling.

B. CAMELLIA . . .

Truly the Camellia of the Begonia family. The bloom is of good size and has a rose pink base-coloring shading to a cream edge on each petal. Is named for its close resemblance to the Camellia, and is splendid for corsages.

B. MARGINATA, WHITE . . .

B. MARGINATA, YELLOW . . .

These varieties are of the single ruffled type, but with very distinct markings. B. Marginata is a four petal variety. Its coloring is lemon yellow from the center of the bloom to within one-quarter inch of the edge, which is reddish bronze, making a very striking color combination.

B. Marginata White is white from the center to within a quarter of an inch of the edge, which is a clear pink. This type or variety is generally the first seen when visitors enter our Greenhouse. Everyone seems to single out and exclaim over this variety regardless of where it may be located.

This is the newest variety from Belgium ready for release now. It was imported in 1934.

TUBEROUS BEGONIAS . . .

and How They are Grown

WHILE in the service overseas, Carlton Lowe noticed wonderful fields of tuberous begonias in Belgium growing with apparently little care. Upon inquiry he found that seed could still be imported into the United States. Returning here, he struggled for eight years to get the first blossom from seed.

Now he uses an electric sterilizer to kill bugs and diseases in the soil before sowing the seed. This is started in January. Begonia seed is as fine as dust and is purchased by the tenth gram from Belgium, Germany and England. It is expensive because fertilization has to be done by hand with a camelshair brush as the bees will not pollinate the flowers as they are odorless.

In order to plant thinly, the seed is spread on glass, then held over a flat and gently tapped, watching closely as the seed rolls over the edge. Ten days later the plants must be transplanted, although they are only the size of a pinhead. Soil is sifted through fly screening and the tiny plants moved to their new home with the aid of magnifying glasses and the bent prongs of a steel pen. No fingers are small enough to handle the tiny infants. One person can transplant about 4,000 a day. Then he must change to work which is not so close.

The original soil is disturbed as little as possible as another batch of seedlings will soon sprout up again. Three or four transplantings will be made from the first sowing of seed, the later plants being the most unusual in coloring and shape. Even though extreme care is taken to sow thinly, sometimes 3,000 to 5,000 plants will be taken from an ordinary flat.

During this stage of their life the tiny plants are watered by an atomizer and covered with a sheet of glass. But after they grow up to occupy a three-inch pot they can be readily handled by the average layman.

CULTURAL REQUIREMENTS

This is what we have found successful culture, but plants may vary in different soils and locations.

Tuberous begonias thrive best in an open, porous soil made up of one part sand, one part well rotted cow manure, one part peat moss, two parts clay loam. If your soil is clay or sand, dig it out and mix with the other necessary ingredients.

The succulent foliage and stems indicate that the plants are gross feeders, requiring plenty of water and fertilizer. However, they must be well drained.

It is well to treat these begonias as annuals, as the foliage and stems mature the middle of November thus not making a satisfactory house plant. Then, too, they like a cooler temperature than is found in the average living room.

As a general rule, do not plant three years in the same soil without sterilizing or changing it.

Torenia fourneri, heliotrope, lobelia, or the fibrous rooted coral begonias make good bedding companions for tuberous rooted begonias, seeming to prefer the same conditions. When heliotrope is used it will supplement the begonias lack of odor and thus form a perfect bedding combination.

CHILLICOTHE ROAD, CHAGRIN FALLS, OHIO

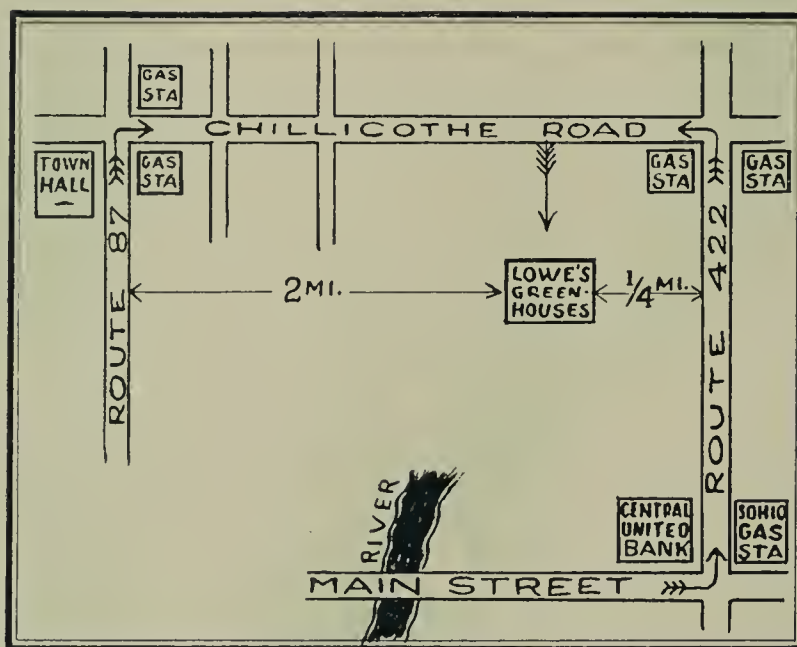
Specialists in

Tuberous Begonias

Potted Annuals

Miniature and Pompon Dahlias

Visitors always welcome, but especially in September and October, when the tuberous begonias and miniature and pompon dahlias are at their best.



Follow State Route 422 from Cleveland to Chagrin Falls. Upon entering the town follow the route numbers right and then left at the end of Main Street. Three miles beyond Chagrin, turn left, or north, onto Chillicothe Road at McFarland's Corners. The greenhouse is about a half mile down on the left side of the road.

Lowe's Greenhouse and Nursery
Chagrin Falls, Ohio